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## **OAKS CONTENDER FARRELL RETURNS IN SATURDAY NIGHT'S DOGWOOD; TEST STAKES THIRD TEQUILITA AMONG CHALLENGERS IN FULL FIELD OF 14**

**LOUISVILLE, Ky. (Wednesday, Sept. 20, 2017)** – Three-time Grade II winner **Farrell** returns to racing action for the first time since competing in the \$1 million Longines Kentucky Oaks (GI) more than four months ago when she headlines a full field of 14 3-year-old fillies that includes Test Stakes (GI) third **Tequilita** in Saturday night's 42<sup>nd</sup> running of the \$100,000 Dogwood Stakes Presented by GE Appliances (listed) – the featured seven-furlong event at Churchill Downs during a special Downs After Dark nighttime racing program.

The 11-race evening program – the final nighttime card at Churchill Downs this year – also will include a marquee race for purebred Arabians: the \$100,000 President of the United Arab Emirates Cup, a Grade I event over 1 1/16 miles for 4-years-old and up featuring defending champ and two-time reigning Arabian Horse of the Year **Paddys Day**.

Owned and bred by **Bob Cummings** and **Annette Bacola's** Coffeepot Stables and trained by **Wayne Catalano**, Farrell (8-5-0-1—\$611,357) entered the 1 1/8-mile Kentucky Oaks as the 4-1 second betting choice after she headed the 14 entries as the Road to the Kentucky Oaks points leader with 171 thanks to wins in last fall's \$200,000 Golden Rod (GII) at Churchill Downs and an impressive sweep of Fair Grounds' 3-year-old fillies series: the \$150,000 Silverbulletday, \$200,000 Rachel Alexandra (GII) and \$400,000 Fair Grounds Oaks (GII).

But the lilies weren't meant to be draped around Farrell's shoulders that first Friday in May when rain drenched the racetrack and the early pace came up hot. After a first quarter mile in :22.79 and the half in :46.24, Farrell had dead aim on early leaders **Paradise Woods** and **Miss Sky Warrior** when they entered the far turn but she failed to respond to regular rider **Channing Hill's** urging when the trio left the three-eighths pole and faded fast over the "sloppy" track and was eased to finish last.

"It was disappointing," Hill said after the race. "I didn't think (the sloppy conditions) would bother her but obviously it did. You never know with this game but that's why you have to run them. She did everything else good but like the track."

"I had a perfect set up," echoed Catalano. "It was a speed-favoring track. I know from being a (former) jock, on a track like that, I knew how the front two were going to ride, so I was laying where I wanted. It was up to her at that point and Channing said she couldn't handle the track at all. I knew it was going to be tough because of the track."

The weather conditions for Farrell's first start in 141 days are likely to be ideal. The **National Weather Service** forecast for Louisville on Saturday calls for sunny skies with a high near 89 and a low around 66, which means the track will be "fast."

Farrell, a Kentucky-bred daughter of Malibu Moon out of the Unbridled's Song mare Rebridled Dreams, will break from post No. 8 in the field of 14 under Hill, and will cut-back to a one-turn sprint for the first time since last October.

While the weather won't be an issue, the Maryland invasion of Tequilita (9-3-3-1—\$348,540) could be. Owned and bred by **Dorothy "D.D." Matz** and trained by her husband **Michael**, Tequilita was a surging third behind comfortable winner **American Gal** in the \$500,000 Test (GI) over seven furlongs on Aug. 5 at Saratoga – her first start since a seventh-place finish in the Kentucky Oaks.

The Kentucky-bred daughter of Union Rags out of the Mr. Greeley mare Sangrita secured a spot in the Oaks by winning the seven-furlong Forward Gal (GII) in February and finishing second to **Salty** in the Gulfstream Park Oaks (GII) in April.

Farrell and Tequilita – the only two U.S. graded stakes winners in the field – are expected to vie for favoritism in the competitive lineup that also includes **WinStar Farm's** up-and-comer **Covenant** (2-1-1-0—\$57,790); Davona Dale (GII) runner-up and Kentucky Oaks 12<sup>th</sup> **Jordan's Henny** (13-2-3-4—\$180,921); and a quartet of entrants that made their last start in graded stakes company: Test ninth **Minnie Blip** (4-2-0-0—\$63,130); Prioress (GII) fifth **Student Body** (4-2-0-0—\$61,776); Groupie Doll (GIII) fourth **Pinch Hit** (8-3-2-0—\$98,530); and Victory Ride (GIII) fifth **Too Much Tip** (9-6-0-1—\$127,712), a multiple graded stakes winner at Puerto Rico's Hipódromo Camarero before coming stateside.

The lightly-raced **Covenant**, trained by Churchill Downs' all-time leading trainer in races and stakes won, **Bill Mott**, was a dominate 6 <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>-length maiden winner at 6 <sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> furlongs over "sloppy" going at Saratoga on July 24, and was second to Salty in March debut at Gulfstream Park.

The complete Dogwood field from the rail out (with jockeys): **Pinch Hit** (Jon Court); **Champagne Problems** (Calvin Borel); **Tequilita** (Luis Saez); **Nineteenth Street** (Alonso Quinonez); **Too Much Tip** (Julio Garcia); **Minnie Blip** (Miguel Mena); **Cara Blythe** (Alex Canchari); **Farrell** (Hill); **Student Body** (Brian Hernandez Jr.); **No More Babies** (Joe Rocco Jr.); **My Sweet Stella** (Ricardo Santana Jr.); **Jordan's Henny** (Corey Lanerie); **Covenant** (Florent Geroux); and **Perfect Wife** (Chris Landeros).

All 3-year-old fillies will carry 118 pounds except for **Farrell**, **Tequilita** and **Too Much Tip**, who will tack 122.

The Dogwood, won last year by **G. Watts Humphrey Jr.'s Mines and Magic**, will be run as Race 9 at approximately 10:11 p.m. (all times Eastern) on an 11-race card that begins at 6 p.m.

The race after the Dogwood is the \$100,000 President of the UAE Cup (GI), which will mark the fifth time since 2011 that a race for purebred Arabian 4-years-old and up – the world's most ancient breed of equines – will be run beneath Churchill Downs' world-famous Twin Spires.

Last year, **Quarter Moon Ranch LLC's** Paddys Day defeated **Thess Is Awesome** by 8 <sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> lengths and clocked 1 <sup>1</sup>/<sub>16</sub> miles in a stakes record 1:53.49 as **Calvin Borel** rode the winner for owner/trainer **Scott Powell** en route to his second Arabian Horse of the Year title.

The 6-year-old Texas-bred son of Burning Sand is one of the most accomplished horses in American Arabian racing history, having won 22 of his 32 starts, with seven seconds and no thirds, and banking an American Arabian record \$485,346. He hasn't finished worse than second in the United States in nearly three years (Oct. 18, 2014), and has been favored in all but three of his American starts.

Paddys Day, who'll be ridden Saturday by **Keiber Coa**, will attempt to win his fifth Grade I event of this year and eighth overall. The bay Arabian rolled to a 5 <sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>-length win in his last start on Sept. 4, the \$50,000 Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan Cup (GI) over one mile at Monmouth Park, to sweep all three legs of that breed's Triple Jewel Series.

**Betty J. and Joseph A. Gillis'** 5-year-old gray **Easter Man** (19-9-7-2—\$188,965) appears to be Paddys Day's stiffest competition. The Mississippi-bred son of Burning Sand handed Paddys Day his only two losses this year in a 1 <sup>1</sup>/<sub>16</sub>-mile allowance at Delaware Park on July 24 and the 1 <sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>-mile Delaware Park Arabian Classic Handicap (GI) on Aug. 19. Trained by **Jerenesto Torrez**, Easter Man hasn't raced since his 9-2 upset over Paddys Day one month ago.

The complete field (with jockeys and assigned weight): **Kao Maloan SWA** (Borel, 121 pounds); **Sand Victor** (Alex Canchari, 123); **Thess Is Awesome** (Corey Lanerie, 123); **Quick And Rich** (Joe Rocco Jr., 121); **Risky Red** (Robert Paz, 118); **Raineing Sand** (Florent Geroux, 121); **Lil Dude AA** (Miguel Mena, 121); Paddys Day (Coa, 123); and Easter Man (Carol Cedeno, 123).

Post time for the President of the UAE Cup, which goes as Race 10 of 11, is 10:42 p.m. The race will be televised live in the United Arab Emirates on the Abu Dhabi Sports Channel.

Presented by **Stella Artois** and **Woodford Reserve**, the theme for the lone Downs After Downs event at the 11-date September Meet is **"Bourbon, Bets & Bow Ties."** The evening is an opportunity to celebrate the best of the south including bourbon, Thoroughbred racing and fashion. Track officials plan to infuse a contemporary yet timeless Southern style into everything from food and music to décor and local art. Admission gates open Saturday at 5 p.m. and the final race of the evening is scheduled for 11:10 p.m. General admission is \$10 and reserved seat packages start at \$25, which are available for purchase on [www.ChurchillDowns.com](http://www.ChurchillDowns.com).

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